

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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R 021755Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3087

INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE

AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: ANDREOTTI ASSESSES CURRENT ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION

SUMMARY. IN AN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED MARCH 2 IN LE MONDE  
LARGELY DEVOTED TO COMMENTS ON THE ITALIAN PLITICAL SITUATIONS,  
PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI TOOK A MORE QUALIFIED VIEW OF  
THE POSSIBILITY OF THE PCI'S DEMOCRATIC EVOLUTION (SOME-  
THING THAT MUST BE APPROACHED "WITH PRUDENCE AND  
DIFFIDENCE") THAN THAT EXPRESSED IN PAST STATEMENTS.  
SINCE EARLY ELECTIONS WOULD BENEFIT NO PARTY AND THE  
HISTORIC COMPROMISE WAS "UNATTAINABLE," ANY CHANGE IN THE  
PRESENT FORMULA DEPENDED ON THE SOCIALISTS. HOWEVER, SINCE  
PSI HAD CLEARLY STATED ITS PRESENT UNWILLINGNESS TO JOIN  
IN A NEW COALITION WITH THE DC, ANDREOTTI SAID HIS  
GOVERNMENT WOULD REMAIN IN PLACE FOR SOME TIME  
FOR WANT OF ANY ALTERNATIVE. HE INTERESTINGLY PICKED  
UP A PROPOSAL RECENTLY ADVANCED BY A LEFT-WING PSI  
LEADER (INCLUSION OF TECHNICIAN MINISTERS REPRESENTING  
LEFT PARTIES) AS A "POSSIBILITY" WHICH

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COULD SERVE TO "GUARANTEE" THE INTERESTS OF PARTIES  
WHO FURNISH OUTSIDE SUPPORT TO THE GOVERNMENT. END  
SUMMARY.

1. ANDREOTTI DESCRIBED THE POLITICAL SITUATION AS ES-  
SENTIALLY UNCHANGED SINCE LAST JULY. WHILE HE COULD  
NOT PREDICT THE FUTURE, HE SAID HE PERSONALLY DID

NOT BELIEVE IN THE VALUE OF A "TEST OF STRENGTH" (I.E. NEW ELECTIONS) WHICH WOULD BENEFIT NO PARTY. NEITHER DID HE BELIEVE IN THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE: "THIS IS NOT ATTAINABLE. WHEN ONE SPEAKS OF IT, IT'S AS IF IT CONCERNS ONLY THE RESPECTIVE POSITIONS OF THE DC AND THE PCI." ANDREOTTI CAUTIONED THAT SUCH AN INTERPRETATION IGNORES THE SMALLER PARTIES "WHICH HAVE NONETHELESS THEIR SAY IN THE MATTER."

2. ANDREOTTI POINTED TO THE SOCIALISTS AS HOLDING THE KEY TO ANY MODIFICATION OF THE PRESENT POLITICAL FRAMEWORK. "AS LONG AS THEY DO NOT CHANGE THEIR POSITION, NO ALTERNATIVE TO THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT FORMULA EXISTS." THE DECISION WAS COMPLETELY UP TO THE PSI. ANDREOTTI SAID THAT SINCE THE PCI HAS MADE CLEAR ITS CURRENT UNWILLINGNESS TO JOIN IN A NEW COALITION WITH THE DC, HIS GOVERNMENT COULD LAST FOR SOME TIME.

3. ANDREOTTI INTERESTINGLY ALLOWED THAT THE PROPOSAL ADVANCED LAST WEEK BY LEFT-WING PSI LEADER MANCA FOR INCLUSION OF TECHNICIAN-MINISTERS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LEFT PARTIES WAS A "POSSIBILITY". HE POINTED OUT THAT HIS GOVERNMENT ALREADY INCLUDED A TECHNICIAN (OSSAOLA). "IN THE FUTURE, PARTICIPATION OF OTHER TECHNICIANS COULD CONSTITUTE A KIND OF GUARANTEE FOR THE PARTIES WHO LEND THEIR SUPPORT TO THE GOVERNMENT BUT WHO REMAIN OUTSIDE IT."

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4. IN CONTRAST TO HIS EARLIER LESS QUALIFIED ASSESSEMENTS OF THE PCI'S COMMITMENT TO "DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM," ANDREOTTI SAID THAT THE PROBLEM MUST BE APPROACHED WITH "A LITTLE PRUDENCE AND DIFFIDENCE." ALTHOUGH THE PCI HAD MADE SOME FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES (E.G. SUPPORT OF NATO TO PRESERVE THE POWER BALANCE), ANDREOTTI SAID THAT ONE MUST WAIT AND SEE IF THE PCI REALLY HAS THE "POSSIBILITY AND THE WILL TO GIVE BIRTH TO A NEW TYPE OF PARTY" (I.E. DEMOCRATIC AND INDEPENDENT OF MOSCOW) THE 1978 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS MIGHT CLARIFY THIS IF THE PCI ALLIES ITSELF THERE WITH "SORT OF LEFT-DEMOCRATIC AND EUROPEAN SOCIALIST FRONT". UNTIL PCI DEMONSTRATED THAT IT HAD EVOLVED INTO A FULLY DEMOCRATIC PARTY, ANDREOTTI SAID PCI WOULD NOT QUALIFY FOR PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT.

5. ANDREOTTI ALSO COMMENTED ON THE PROBLEMS OF THE PCI LEADERSHIP CAUSED BY THEIR "RESPONSIBLE" SUPPORT OF HIS GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT "IT MUST NOT ALWAYS

BE EASY TO REPLY TO QUESTIONS POSED BY THE PARTY'S  
BASE. IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT AFTER 30 EYARS  
SPENT VOTING AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, THAT THE  
LEADERSHIP HAS SOME TROUBLE IN JUSTIFYING ITS ATTITUDE  
OF SUPPORT." HOWEVER, THE PCI LEADERSHIP HAD NONETHELESS  
REMAINED COMMITTED TO "THE DECISIONS THEY TOOK LAST  
JULY".

6. COMMENT. IN PRESENTING A MORE QUALIFIED AND HARDENED VIEW OF  
THE PCI, ANDREOTTI MAY HAVE BEEN REPSONDING TO THE CRITICISM FROM  
SOME QUARTERS OF HIS PARTY THAT HE HAS BEEN TOO AMENABLE TO UNDER-  
STANDING WITH THE PCI. WE ARE ALSO STRUCK WITH THE IMPORTANCE  
ANDREOTTI GAVE TO THE SOCIALISTS AND OTHR MINOR PARTIES. HIS  
STATEMENTS ARE CONSISTENT WITH OTHR DC OVERTURES LAST WEEK  
"ZACCAGNINI, BISAGLIA) TO THE SOCIALISTS. (WE UNDERSTAND THAT  
INTERVIEW WAS COMPLETED DURING MIDDLE OF LAST WEEK, PRIOR TO LAST  
WEEK-END'S PSI BLOW-UP). HIS FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARD MANCA'S  
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PROPOSAL TO INCLUDE TECHNICIAN-MINISTERS IN THE GOVERNMENT TO  
"GUARANTEE" LEFT-PARTY INTERESTS MAY HAVE BEEN PART OF THE NOW-  
STALLED DC EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE THE PSI TO JOIN IN A NEW COAL-  
ITION. A PSI HEADQUARTERS SOURCE, HOWEVER, TELLS US THAT MANCA'S  
INITIATIVE DID NOT REFLECT PARTY POLICY, BEAUDRY

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## Message Attributes

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